United Nations A/HRC/37/57/Add.2

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 January 2018

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Thirty-seventh session
26 February–23 March 2018
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism on the expert workshop on witchcraft and human rights

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Human Rights Council the report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism on the expert workshop on witchcraft and human rights.

Summary

The expert workshop on witchcraft and human rights took place on 21 and 22 September 2017 in Geneva. Its objective was to advance the discourse on the phenomena of witchcraft and its various manifestations, both generally and in the context of harmful practices, to ultimately ensure the enjoyment of human rights by all victims. The workshop's outcomes, summarized in the present document, indicate a rich plurality of experiences around the phenomena and a consensus condemnation of the common issues of harm and impunity, among others. Participants adopted concrete recommendations on the way forward, in the framework of international human rights law.

GE.18-01039(E)
1801039

Please recycle

Report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism on the expert workshop on witchcraft and human rights*

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
	A. Objectives of the expert workshop	4
	B. Organizers and sponsors	4
	C. Moderators, panellists and participants	4
	D. Opening statements	4
II.	Conceptualization of witchcraft	5
	A. Manifestations of witchcraft beliefs and practices	5
	B. The meaning of "witchcraft"	7
III.	Harmful practices	8
	A. Accusations of witchcraft	8
	B. Ritual attacks and killings	10
IV.	Witchcraft in regional contexts	11
	A. Africa	11
	B. Asia and the Pacific	11
	C. Europe	12
V.	Civil society and faith-based perspectives	13
	A. Civil society	13
	B. Faith-based perspectives	14
VI.	Conclusions and recommendations	15
Annex		
	List of participants	18

* Circulated in the language of submission only.

I. Introduction

1. In numerous countries around the world, witchcraft-related beliefs and practice[1] have resulted in serious violations of human rights, including beatings, banishment, cutting of body parts, amputation of limbs, grave robberies, torture and murder. Women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, and particularly persons with albinism, are vulnerable. Despite the seriousness of these human rights abuses, there is often no robust State-led response. Often, judicial systems do not act to prevent, investigate or prosecute human rights abuses linked to belief in, and the practice of, witchcraft. This institutional failure perpetuates impunity.

2. Beliefs and practices related to witchcraft vary considerably between different countries and even within ethnicities in the same country. There is, overall, a limited understanding of belief in witchcraft, how it may be practised in some cultures, and why. The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions stated in a 2009 report that human rights abuses carried out due to belief in witchcraft have "not featured prominently on the radar screen of human rights monitors" and that "this may be due partly to the difficulty of defining 'witches' and 'witchcraft' across cultures — terms that, quite apart from their connotations in popular culture, may include an array of traditional or faith healing practices and are not easily defined. The fact remains, however, that under the rubric of the amorphous and manipulable designation of 'witchcraft', individuals (often those who are somehow different, feared or disliked) are singled out for arbitrary private acts of violence or for Government-sponsored or tolerated acts of violence" (see A/HRC/11/2, para. 43). According to the Witchcraft and Human Rights Network, there is currently no normative framework or formal mechanism to conceptualize, record, monitor or respond to such violations.

3. The exact number of victims of such abuse is unknown, and is widely believed to be underreported.[2] It is believed that, each year, there are at the very least thousands of cases of people accused of witchcraft globally, often with fatal consequences, and others are mutilated and killed for witchcraft-related rituals.[3] The literature asserts that these numbers are increasing, with cases becoming more violent, the practices spreading and new classes of victims being created, although the difficulty in proving such claims quantitatively is acknowledged. These practices are also increasingly a challenge for countries in the global North, mainly within migrant communities.

4. Witchcraft beliefs, practices and related consequences have been reported in the United Nations by various high-level officials and experts — although from a specific perspective and often in a specific country and context. These include the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,[4] the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. Some experts have also sent communications to States on the matter, including the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, as well as the former Independent Expert on technical cooperation and advisory services in Liberia. The

[1] The concepts of, for example, "witchcraft" and "witchcraft beliefs, practices and consequences" as used in the present document are preliminary. They are indicative of the ideas conveyed and are not intended to be the final and only means of expressing those ideas. For these preliminary purposes, the term "witchcraft" is taken to include "*muti*" and similar ritual killings and ritual attacks.

[2] See, for example, Karen McVeigh, "Child witchcraft claims increasing as 'hidden crime' is investigated", *Guardian*, 8 October 2014; and Ruth Evans, "Witchcraft abuse cases on the rise", BBC News, 11 October 2015.

[3] See Philip Alston, "Of witches and robots: the diverse challenges of responding to unlawful killings in the twenty-first century", *Macalester International*, vol. 28, art. 7 (2012); and Jill Shnoebelen, "Witchcraft allegations, refugee protection and human rights: a review of the evidence", Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), research paper No. 169, available from www.unhcr.org/4981ca712.pdf.

[4] See http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/page/850.

Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism has also broached the issue of witchcraft in her last two reports (A/72/131 and A/HRC/34/59), and considers that a more holistic approach to the phenomena is necessary.[5]

A. Objectives of the expert workshop

5. The expert workshop was organized with a view to enabling greater understanding of witchcraft-related beliefs and practices and their impact on the enjoyment of human rights, and to develop solutions to prevent further abuses from taking place. Furthermore, the expert workshop aimed to mainstream the issue into the United Nations human rights system and to provide practical guidance to relevant actors, on the basis of the present outcome document.[6]

B. Organizers and sponsors

6. The expert workshop was organized by the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism, Ikponwosa Ero; Gary Foxcroft, Director of the Witchcraft and Human Rights Network; and Charlotte Baker of Lancaster University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Co-organizers were the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devendas-Aguilar; the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Dubravka Simonovic; and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnes Callamard. The expert workshop was sponsored by the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva of Canada, Israel, Portugal, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the non-governmental organization (NGO) Under the Same Sun.

C. Moderators, panellists and participants

7. The workshop was attended by about 130 participants consisting of experts from the United Nations, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, State institutions, NGOs and faith-based organizations. Several victims of harmful practices related to beliefs in witchcraft also shared their testimonies. The list of participants is contained in the annex to the present report.

D. Opening statements

8. In her capacity as overall moderator, Kirsty Brimelow QC, Chair, Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, opened the meeting by thanking the sponsors. She highlighted the historic nature of the event as the first international, in-depth exploration of the nature and impact of witchcraft on human rights, the result of collaboration between United Nations experts, academics and civil society organizations.

9. The Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights in her statement highlighted that the purpose of the workshop was to alleviate human suffering, which could and must be prevented. In that regard, the workshop's aim of creating a visible pathway towards ending the egregious bodily harm perpetrated in connection with witchcraft was vital. The core concern was with harm, not belief, and with deeds, not thoughts. Whatever the justification — witchcraft, spirituality, religion, political ideology, ignorance, tradition or fad — beatings, banishment, cutting off body parts of people with albinism, amputation of limbs, torture and murder constituted appalling violations of human rights.

---

[5] As the Independent Expert has previously indicated, she refers to "witchcraft" as "phenomena" to reflect the plurality of concepts, terms, practices and beliefs encompassed by the term.

[6] The full discussions at the expert workshop have been webcast and can be viewed at http://webtv.un.org/search/part-1.1-un-experts-workshop-on-witchcraft-and-human-rights/5583193497001/?term=witchcraft&sort=date.

10. The Deputy High Commissioner referred to the many courageous human rights defenders who had addressed the issue and sought local solutions. And yet, robust State-led responses were still missing. In such a context, an accusation of witchcraft provided a convenient justification for community and social exclusion. Such exploitation was a consequence of the failure of the State to provide necessary health, education and justice services and community strengthening for those most at risk from catastrophe. In conclusion, she stressed that efforts to address those issues had to rely on the existing conceptual and practical building blocks of the human rights framework and be guided by the voices of those who had borne the brunt of institutional failure, bigotry and fear.

11. The Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations Office at Geneva, drew attention to her country's role in raising the issues under discussion at the Human Rights Council and in supporting the creation of the mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by people with albinism, whose work she applauded. She also drew attention to the need to address the connection between albinism and related misbeliefs — both positive and negative — in witchcraft. In that context, she highlighted the need for clarity of definitions and distinctions, for example, between witch doctors, traditional healers and fortune tellers.

12. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations Office at Geneva echoed the previous presentations on the historical significance of the meeting, the focus upon harm rather than beliefs and the need to deliver a set of workable and comprehensive recommendations. Finally, a representative of the Permanent Mission of Israel congratulated the organizers and reaffirmed its support to the mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism. The representative recognized that witchcraft beliefs and practices led to serious human rights violations, in particular of vulnerable groups such as children, women, the elderly, persons with disability and persons with albinism. In order to ensure their protection, the workshop was expected to further help the United Nations, States and civil society to further comprehend and tackle the issue. In this endeavour, Israel believed in the fundamental role of education and the role of the State.

II. Conceptualization of witchcraft

A. Manifestations of witchcraft beliefs and practices

13. In India, Ms. Borkataky-Varma explained that it was while conducting her own research on religious sacrifice that she had encountered the topic of witch-hunting and branding and met Birubala Rabha, who was involved in groundbreaking work in challenging beliefs in witchcraft. Ms. Borkataky-Varma read out the following statement of Ms. Rabha on her behalf:

> As a member of one of the most "backward" scheduled tribal communities in Assam (Pati Rabha), it saddens me that belief in witchcraft and the practice of witch-hunting are common among indigenous societies in Assam. A local soothsayer predicted the death of my son, who has mental disabilities. The fact that my son survived, disproving the prophecy, made me question this kind of superstitious belief. I began to understand that belief in witchcraft is the result of lack of education, governance, health and development, as well as poverty.
>
> When my husband died, I was both a widow and the mother of a child with a disability. People in my community, including some in my own family, began to call me a witch (*daina*). As a result, and in response to my efforts to challenge witch-hunting, I was ostracized for three years and villagers were fined for speaking to me. This did not deter me, and I expanded my campaigning against witchcraft, working in collaboration with NGOs, defending and supporting those accused. Motivations behind such accusations included not only ignorance, but also jealousy and greed (e.g., for land) and sexual exploitation. Through my involvement with the Assam Mahila Samata Society, I came to learn about governance, social welfare, women's issues and

legal rights. I also formed meaningful relationships with government officials, including the deputy commissioner, police personnel and lawyers.

With a new confidence, I returned to my village. Through slow and steady effort, attitudes began to change and people came to understand that witch-hunting and branding are forms of gender violence and as such constitute criminal offences. In 2011, I established Mission Birubala with the goal of eradicating superstition and beliefs in witchcraft and related violence. We have worked in half of the districts in the State of Assam, rescuing 99 women who were accused of witchcraft, as well as many men and women who were being victimized in the course of family disputes. We promote awareness, literacy and rehabilitation through health camps and the work of our student cells. We are also supporting the state government to enact the Assam Witch Hunting Prohibition, Prevention and Protection Bill of 2015.

14. Mardouche Yembi was born in a village in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the fifth of seven children. He described how, following his mother's death when he was 8 years old, as one of the younger children, he was taken to the United Kingdom to live with an uncle. He was settling in and making friends when his aunt the spouse of his uncle — began having dreams of being pursued by a spirit. Attending a local church with his aunt, the pastor asked Mardouche about his sleep and dreams and told Mardouche he was affected by *kindoki*, which is the Congolese term for a type of witchcraft. He was then isolated at home and a decision was made to send him back to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for exorcism.

15. When his family requested that he be released from school, a teacher intervened and referred the matter to social services, who removed him from the family home and placed him in foster care. The impact of the accusation was profound, leaving him depressed and at times suicidal. Nonetheless, he felt lucky to have been in the United Kingdom when the accusation was made since he knew that things could have turned out far worse for him had he been living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

16. Mariamu Staford, a woman with albinism, described the horrific attack that happened in her home in the United Republic of Tanzania when she was six months pregnant, and in the presence of her 2-year-old son. Four men entered the room where she was sleeping and attacked her with machetes. The one who did the actual cutting had been her neighbour for 10 years. He told Mariamu that "all they needed were her arms". After the attacks, it took seven hours for other neighbours, on foot, to carry her on a stretcher to the nearest dispensary. The doctor on duty told the group that Mariamu was already dead. The police then took her to the district hospital where her wounds were attended to and the (now dead) fetus was removed.

17. Upon her discharge five months later, the district commissioner provided temporary accommodation in unused government personnel housing in an urban area because it was not considered safe for her to return to her village. A plan was made to build a home for her. However, after six months, she was informed that as she was not a government employee she needed to leave. Following the considerable media attention that followed her attack and recovery, Under the Same Sun intervened and took her to safety. In collaboration with ABC news, they arranged for Mariamu to go to the United States to have prosthetic limbs made and fitted. They also supported her rehabilitation, education and training. She now uses her prostheses to knit and has established a small business to support herself. Under the Same Sun has also built a new home for her in Kilimanjaro. The organization has also supported the education of Mariamu's son and two of her siblings who also have albinism.

18. The perpetrator of the assault was released on the grounds that Mariamu's visual impairment prevented her from making a definitive identification, despite the fact that he was someone she had known and lived beside for 10 years. Mariamu concluded by thanking the United Nations for its efforts to protect persons with albinism.

B. The meaning of "witchcraft"

19. Rev. Samuel Waje Kunhiyop explained that witchcraft was generally believed to be the supernatural ability to perform acts of evil, including pain, sickness, misfortune and death. In traditional African societies, there used to be a belief in "good witchcraft", which was understood in terms of supernatural, extraordinary powers or abilities, for example in farming, hunting, running or wrestling. That aspect had been forgotten, and the focus now was on the negative dimensions of witchcraft.

20. While people believed in natural causes of certain events, they also tended to believe that "things don't just happen". As such, events were often attributed to the supernatural, a realm that had also been incorporated within both Christianity and Islam. The fusion of such beliefs with other traditional and cultural concepts had given rise to a new and contemporary notion of a globalized witchcraft fuelled by social media and Nollywood — the Nigerian film industry — which is very popular across Africa. To deny witchcraft was to deny pain, suffering and evil. Confessions and storytelling provided "evidence" and "proof" that drove the continuing belief in witchcraft. In turn, those beliefs were ruthlessly exploited and manipulated for financial gain.

21. Jean La Fontaine noted that academics could help practitioners in the field by clarifying culturally or socially important conceptual distinctions. In her view, witchcraft was a firm and current belief that incorporated and interacted with other belief systems (such as Christianity) that took for granted the notion of generic human evil. For example, in a family setting, a child might be singled out on the basis of character, behaviour or appearance. In witch-believing societies, that could easily lead to suspicions and accusations of witchcraft. Witch-believing communities, which were often also among the poorest and weakest, provided easy fodder for those who claimed the ability to identify witches. Providing such "services", whether well intentioned or for the purposes of cynical exploitation, could generate income for those who offered them. Furthermore, as well as understanding who is likely to be accused, it was also important to consider who made the accusations and with what motivations. Similarly, it was necessary to understand who promoted and sustained witchcraft beliefs as well as how they did it, and why.

22. In Simeon Mesaki's view, witchcraft referred to the belief in, and the use of, supernatural or magical powers to achieve good or bad outcomes. With ancient origins, belief in witchcraft was encountered throughout history and across the globe, albeit in a considerable variety of forms and belief systems. Understanding such beliefs was challenging because they existed in a climate of secrecy and fear. The concept of witchcraft was based upon a widely held belief that misfortune could be attributed to supernatural entities or the malevolence of earthly individuals. Popular ideas of witchcraft might encompass elements of sorcery, magic, shamanism, superstition, folklore and traditional medicine. In some settings, witches were believed to use medicines, charms and similar objects, and that contributed to the colonial construct of "witch doctor". In some countries, most notably the United Republic of Tanzania, recent decades had witnessed growing demand (for so-called magical purposes) for witchcraft, as demonstrated by a corresponding trade in the body parts of children and adults with albinism. That demand, generated by personal and material motives, had led to numerous murders and violent attacks.

23. Rev. Abel Ngolo focused on the Congolese context, where witchcraft (*kindoki*, practised by a witch, *ndoki*) referred to a superhuman power or force. Nowadays, that was understood to be predominantly for malevolent purposes, but it could also be benevolent. The individual who possessed such power was human in appearance but had supernatural power, commonly associated with an internal organ (hereditary or acquired) or magical substance. The power was used to cause harm or misfortune to others. Most commonly, the organ was believed to be within the abdomen. Some practitioners were believed to avoid surgery for fear of diminishing their power. The perceived power — either to protect or harm — created ambivalent responses among others: belief in the power of good, but also fear of the threat of harm.

24. There was often no belief in death from natural causes; instead, there was often what was considered a deeper and truer explanation for death, namely the destructive and

malevolent force of *ndoki*. Sorcery was understood to be inherently implicated in a variety of misfortunes, including sickness and death, bad luck or an unsuccessful business. Accusations and claims of sorcery were everyday occurrences in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Together with their cumulative impact upon poor and vulnerable households, and given the country's history of social and economic instability, children could be a conspicuous and convenient scapegoat. People from a variety of backgrounds and organizations — teachers, pastors, priests, NGOs and public institutions — had collaborated in combating sorcery and related popular justice, encouraging people to consider the actual sources of their misfortune and hardship.

25. In his experience, Robert Priest noted that witchcraft had multiple meanings in different settings. For example, in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa, the words for witchcraft included *amchawi*, *ndoki* and *umthakathi*, each of which referred to an evil individual who possessed mysterious power that could cause misfortunes, harm or death in others. However, even when people used the same word with the same connotations, they were not talking about the same thing. For example, the Pew Bible referred to witches, but in that context, a "witch" was someone who predicted the future by divining omens, examining organs of sacrificed animals and making contact with the dead. That profile of the witch was not recognizable to Swahili, Kikongo, Hausa or Zulu speakers, who consulted a *mganga*, *mai duba*, *sangoma* or *nganga-kisi* for assistance in divining the future, interpreting omens or contacting deceased ancestors. Traditionally, those healers or diviners were understood to provide protection from witches, while the Bible clearly associated those activities with witches who were, in turn, collaborators of Satan.

26. A number of seminary students in Kenya and in the United States of America were asked if they were personally acquainted with someone accused of killing a person through witchcraft. Among the Kenyans, only 17 per cent of them (predominantly Kikuyu) said that they did not have such an acquaintance; almost all the Kamba, Luhya, Luo and Kisii respondents reported having several relatives or neighbours who had been so accused. Among the respondents in the United States, a majority had had no such acquaintance, two of those who responded positively were conducting missionary work in India and Africa when they encountered the accusation. Very few of the seminarians in the United States associated "witch" with the idea familiar in many other societies of causing misfortune or harm to relatives or neighbours.

27. What motivated people to drive orphaned children onto the streets of Kinshasa, to force older women into the witch camps of Ghana or to lynch elderly men in Malindi, Kenya, and old Sukuma widows in the United Republic of Tanzania? They were retaliatory responses to agents of perceived harm. Pastor Abel Ngolo had surveyed 713 pastors in Kinshasa, who reported that they knew many children who had been accused of being witches, blamed for financial difficulties, sickness, death, bad luck, infertility and impotence. The notion of harm was crucial to the idea of witches and witchcraft. The perceived severity of the (supposedly) inflicted harm was used by perpetrators to justify the extreme nature of their retaliatory actions.

III. Harmful practices

A. Accusations of witchcraft

28. The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killings stressed that witchcraft-related violations of the right to life amounted to arbitrary killings, triggering State responsibility whenever it had failed to act to prevent killings that were foreseeable and preventable. She recommended that witchcraft-related killings be treated as hate crimes, demanding that States adopt a range of additional legal, investigatory, sentencing and protection measures whenever there were suspicions that a killing could be related to witchcraft. The aggravating factors of such hate crimes included the extreme seriousness of the assault against and harm of the victims, their extreme vulnerability and the motivations of the attackers. In practical terms, that meant that the State must do everything in its power to prevent the occurrence of witchcraft-related killings, including by actively countering

harmful stereotyping. Ms. Callamard also called for firm legal protection, implementation of non-discrimination measures in any State action and demonstration of the effectiveness of State policies and practices with regard to the prevention and investigation of witchcraft killings, punishment of the perpetrators and remedies for the victims or their families.

29. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences pointed out that within the context of the mandate, she had identified several cases related to witchcraft accusations and beliefs. Those cases concerned allegations of violence and gender-related killings, in which witchcraft accusations had resulted in gender-based violence against women and girls.[7] In that regard, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child had recognized witchcraft accusations to be among the determinants of harmful practices against women and children. Furthermore, the existing and robust framework of international human rights obligations should be upheld by States (based on their direct and primary responsibility) and non-State actors, through due diligence. Moreover, there was an urgent need for education and enhancing the capacity for data analysis and monitoring in the area of gender-based violence, including regarding witchcraft-related harmful practices.

30. In her statement, Reine Alpini-Gansou recalled that human rights were multidimensional and recognized the misbeliefs about persons with albinism and witchcraft accusations against children. In that respect, she underscored that the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights had recently endorsed the Regional Action Plan on Albinism, which would be submitted to the Human Rights Council as an addendum to the report of the Independent Expert (A/HRC/37/57/Add.3). The enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism was protected by African human rights instruments and was increasingly being addressed by human rights bodies of the African Union. With regard to the way forward, specific measures were necessary, including measures of dissent, the strengthening of the mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism in collaboration with regional mechanisms and the strengthening of the capacities of civil society actors.

31. Victoria Lee highlighted that it had reported that persons with disabilities were associated with witchcraft beliefs and practices, including attacks linked to periods of elections. Recognizing that violence against persons with disabilities was rooted in discrimination, multiple discrimination, intersecting discrimination and discrimination by association, States that were parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were obligated to respect, protect and fulfil the rights recognized in the Convention.

32. On behalf of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Kathryn Leslie made a statement in which she stressed that, owing to their vulnerability, victims of witchcraft were often children and that impunity prevailed, as children had little access to redress, rehabilitation and social support, with devastating lifelong consequences. In that regard, additional efforts were required by States if they were to fully comply with the international human rights standards protecting children against all forms of violence, in the private and public spheres. The four overarching principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were articles 2, 19, 24 (3) and 37, which provided a clear framework for addressing violence against children, including witchcraft-related harmful practices.

B. Ritual attacks and killings

33. Ms. Leslie pointed out the challenges in defining ritual attacks and killings. Elements of reference included the hunting down of and brutal aggression against vulnerable people, in particular children, by perpetrators motivated by beliefs in supernatural and magical powers. The Convention on the Rights of the Child required national legislation to have the

[7] See A/HRC/23/49/Add.2, A/HRC/20/16, A/HRC/20/16/Add.4 and Corr.1 and A/HRC/26/38/Add.1; see also the end-of-mission statement following the Special Rapporteur's 2015 visit to South Africa, available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16877&LangID=E.

best interests of the child, non-discrimination, the right to life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child at its core. In particular, concerning cases of ritual attacks and killings, States parties had the obligation of due diligence, including the duty to investigate and prosecute, although many States faced various challenges in doing so. Within that legal and policy framework, a comprehensive and multilevel approach, including legislative and institutional measures across sectors, was urgently needed, with the priority being to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. In that regard early intervention was paramount to tackle risks and safeguard children. That could be done by supporting the protective role of families and, in many cases, working closely with religious and traditional leaders.

34. In the case of ritual killings of persons with albinism, Vicky Ntetema stressed that such crimes were extremely violent and in all cases amounted to human rights violations. The crimes were motivated by witchcraft beliefs that were often promoted by witch doctors, notably for their own enrichment. Those misbeliefs were pervasive in society, as highlighted by the example of the anthropologist and Catholic priest she had encountered who explained that there was good and bad witchcraft; the "good" kind involved the use of body parts of persons with albinism without killing them, for example through grave robbery.

35. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the number of reported cases of witchcraft-related killings was 320 at mid-2015, 303 at mid-2016 and 115 at mid-2017. The decrease might be explained by the decrease of reporting by the media in a context of restricted freedom of the press, rather than a real decrease in ritual attacks and killings. The role of traditional healers and witch doctors had been identified on the basis of investigations and interviews with them. Witchcraft practitioners had a tendency to target specific groups: people who were bald, people with spaces in their teeth and, since 2000, persons with albinism. In 2008, at the peak of attacks against persons with albinism, the Government had prohibited the practice of witchcraft and traditional healing; however, it lifted the ban before the 2010 elections. Today, the United Republic of Tanzania was working with her organization, the United Nations, the national commission on human rights and good governance and other human rights actors to end the killings.

36. In the case of Uganda, Pastor Peter Sewakiryanga referred to the sacrifice of children as witchcraft-motivated ritual killings. The attacks and killings were undertaken to harvest body parts — through kidnapping and mutilation, among other means — which were believed to bring success in fishing, for instance. Children were considered pure, and easy targets whose blood contained magical powers. The impact of such ritual killings was not only the suffering of the victims, but also the distortion of communities.

37. In response to ritual killings of children, prosecution of perpetrators should be accompanied by community education to counter the influence of witchcraft. That was of vital importance, as dramatically illustrated by the case of a 5-year-old boy who killed a 1-year-old boy in a ritual killing because he had seen family members do the same thing.

38. In that context, Pastor Sewakiryanga discussed his actions in the area of strategic litigation, rescue and rehabilitation of children, which left his organization little capacity to engage in public education. In 2009, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had supported the Government in undertaking a rapid appraisal of five districts of Uganda. The recommendations made following that appraisal were still pending implementation. A task force on human trafficking and human sacrifice had been put in place by the police but had yet to prove effective in preventing ritual killings.

39. James Ibor reported cases of abduction, killing and use of body parts for sacrifice in Nigeria as a religious practice to achieve spiritual states. Among witchcraft misbeliefs, it was said that drinking human blood brought power and benefits or magical power to create pain. In that context, the Government should ensure the protection of vulnerable persons, promote scientific inquiries and properly regulate religious activities. The national human rights institution, with the police and civil society, should undertake a campaign to dismantle myths that promoted crimes. The United Nations and the African Union should adopt resolutions condemning ritual attacks and killings.

IV. Witchcraft in regional contexts

A. Africa

40. Patricia Lund emphasized that her role as an academic was to provide evidence to influence policy and advocacy, in particular to challenge the explanations surrounding albinism, whether acceptance or curse, by promoting the genetic explanation through research and projects in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. Recognizing that the explanation of the birth of a baby with albinism shook the whole family and community, she had participated in various projects using song, dance and drama to reach out to communities, with a focus on youth, to convey genetic explanations of albinism.

41. Regarding Malawi, Gertrude Lynn Hiwa provided an overview of the work of the two bodies of which she was a member to curb the violations stemming from belief in witchcraft and related practices, which mainly concerned the revision of the Witchcraft Act (which, however, faced delays) and an awareness campaign about the Penal Code, undertaken despite limited resources. The latter had been amended in 2016 by the Government of Malawi to include specific offences and punishments with respect to crimes against persons with albinism. They included provisions on causing harm to persons with albinism; possession, selling or buying of the bodies or tissues of persons with albinism; and trespassing on burial places of persons with albinism.

42. Regarding the experience of the NGO Standing Voice in the United Republic of Tanzania, Sam Clarke stressed that the experience of living with albinism went beyond the issue of killings. Witchcraft beliefs were about the dehumanization of persons with albinism as well as barriers to education, health and employment. Witchcraft was a system of abuse which was part of a larger system of oppression. An adequate and lasting response should be based on building understanding about albinism as a driver of a change of attitude in populations and families. It should include the promotion of narratives which challenged harmful beliefs, designed for and reaching a large spectrum of stakeholders who in turn would become ambassadors of a narrative based on the understanding of albinism as a genetic condition. In sum, Standing Voice promoted a holistic and participatory approach to attacks and persecution that engaged all stakeholders.

B. Asia and the Pacific

43. Miranda Forsyth highlighted that in Papua New Guinea, over the last 20 years there had been an average of 72 cases of violence related to accusations of sorcery annually, including 30 deaths. The Sorcery National Action Plan was adopted in 2015 to address those cases, whose number was certainly underestimated. Designed with a holistic approach, it included support services, advocacy and communication, legal protection and research. Actions in village courts, such as prevention orders, rapid response teams and community by-laws prohibiting witchcraft accusations, had also been successful. Based on her research and experience, Ms. Forsyth underscored the challenges of a lack of baseline data, dispersed and culturally distinct populations, lack of police presence in cases of immediate danger, safety of witnesses during prosecutions, lack of funding of the Sorcery National Action Plan and the development of uniform and clear messages for communities on the issue.

44. With regard to the situation in India, Dinesh Mishra presented the experience of the Movement against Witchcraft. National statistics had indicated 2,604 deaths due to witchcraft belief and witch-hunting between 2000 and 2015. To address those human rights violations, the Movement against Witchcraft, established in 1995, had organized public meetings and trainings of students; supported victims and their families; conducted surveys on cases; delivered speeches to social organizations; intervened in actual cases; supported rehabilitation, treatment and health facilities; and campaigned for literacy and advocacy for a specific legal framework, which had led to the "Chhattisgargh State Tonhi Pratadana Adhiniyam 2005". In those endeavours, subsisting challenges included the prevalence and multitude of superstitions and myths, illiteracy, unavailability of treatment facilities, and lack of health awareness, a scientific temperament and rational thinking.

45. Father Philip Gibbs acknowledged that violence associated with witchcraft beliefs and practice was receiving increased exposure in Papua New Guinea, even though that did not necessarily confirm that the number of actual cases of violence were increasing. He also highlighted the importance of religion in a country where the majority of people claimed to be Christian. In that context, the Catholic Church had taken a stand against witchcraft beliefs, particularly the violence stemming from witchcraft accusations. On a practical level, some diocese had developed action plans on how to counter the propensity to accuse others of practising witchcraft, and Catholic parishes had been declared places of refuge where a person could go for safety and support. On the basis of his experience, Father Gibbs also recognized the following challenges: rejection by the community of those providing support to persons accused of witchcraft; the collective "hysteria" leading to witchcraft accusations when good and rational leadership was missing; and lack of support from the police and law enforcement agencies in the work carried out by faith-based organizations and NGOs.

46. Avinash Patil gave an account of the action undertaken in India against widespread witchcraft (*dakin*) accusations leading to killings. His organization, Maharashtra Andhshradha Nirmulan Samiti, had started its multilevel action in 2003 to make local government bodies and administrations active on the issue, to run parallel movements to arrest those declaring women and men as *dakin* and ordering that they be killed, and to bring government and civil society to a platform and to discuss and act on it decisively. As a result, there was a national movement against witchcraft accusations, higher awareness and political commitment. The challenges ahead notably included to mainstream the scientific approach in education, to recognize that the issue was not only a tribal one, to achieve the recognition of witchcraft as a social problem by all institutions in society, and to tackle witchcraft beliefs as a means of exploiting women. In that regard, the mobilization of youth was also a strategic focus.

47. Serena Sasingian highlighted the efforts of the Papua New Guinea Department of Justice. She stressed that Papua New Guinea was a nation that was still in the process of being built. The country was experiencing the severest forms of sexual violence in the region and a breakdown of traditional power structures. Further, it was facing challenges due to corruption, as well as shortcomings in the health and education sectors. In the context of ending violence against women, for the first time, a comprehensive action plan was in place and included measures to address sorcery-related violence, including mapping and sensitization.

C. Europe

48. In Europe, manifestations of witchcraft-related harmful practices were also a reality, as exemplified by cases reported in the United Kingdom. Oladapo Awosokanre reported that since 2008, his organization, Africans United Against Child Abuse (AFRUCA), had advocated for the recognition of witchcraft branding of children as a distinct form of abuse in the United Kingdom. The organization's approach encompassed policy advocacy, draft law proposals, awareness-raising, engaging faith and community leaders, workshops within the Black and African communities, workshops for children, training of community volunteers, support to victims and their families, media engagement and the development of research and educational material. With regard to the draft law, AFRUCA had made the following proposals: (a) the law should not be community specific, to avoid stigmatizing a single community; (b) the law should encourage witnesses to step forward, facilitating the obtaining and securing of evidence from communities; (c) legal provisions should facilitate detection, monitoring and reporting, thereby diminishing the risk of pushing abuse underground; (d) the law should focus on the branding of children as witches rather than on ethnicity, thereby avoiding a wider debate on migration; and (e) the law should not invite rebuke from mainstream churches. In that context, the role of faith and community leaders remained significant in shaping and challenging beliefs. The limited knowledge on the part of frontline workers and their lack of coordinated engagement were also among the subsisting challenges.

49. Debbie Crowder described her experience at the Metropolitan Police in London. Harmful practices linked to faith or belief were addressed in the context of the response to

child abuse. In that respect, the mission of the Metropolitan Police was to raise awareness among frontline workers, recognize who might be at risk, develop prevention opportunities and develop intelligence to initiate joint practice. She had identified a series of challenges stemming from the fact that the witchcraft-related harmful practices were hidden crimes; the signs were similar to those of other forms of child abuse, but were not recognized as a specific type of abuse. Other challenges arose from the new information technologies that facilitated access to those willing to exploit, and the fact that witchcraft was assimilated into "mental health" without further expanding the understanding of the cases. Finally, as the institution was not in a position to question beliefs, it focused on abuses.

50. Leethen Bartholomew shared his experience as part of a community partnership project focusing on child abuse, including cases of witchcraft accusations and killings. He highlighted the need to focus not only on the children who were the direct victims of witchcraft accusation, but also on their siblings. He mentioned that, in 2007, the United Kingdom had adopted national guidance on these cases which was of a voluntary nature. That was certainly a positive step, but it was not widely known among concerned professionals. Also, one issue had been left out: in fact, many people, including children, in the United Kingdom also lived in other parts of the world, and children accused of witchcraft had a transnational background which ought to be acknowledged to fully understand the context of the cases. Moreover, professionals who addressed abuse against children often did so without considering faith and beliefs, which further highlighted the need for mainstreaming the consideration of witchcraft in the systemic response to child abuse.

51. Another issue was raised by Michelle Mildwater. In Copenhagen, she had worked with women from Nigeria who were victims of human trafficking. She discovered how witchcraft and customary practices had been used in the modus operandi of human trafficking networks in Nigeria. In that regard, she highlighted that witchcraft accusations and juju oaths (which she posited was not witchcraft per se) had been used to lure Nigerian women into trafficking networks and that the issue should be addressed in Nigeria and worldwide.

V. Civil society and faith-based perspectives

A. Civil society

52. Gary Foxcroft explained that that his organization preferred the terms "witchcraft accusations and persecution" and "*muti* murders". Muti was a Southern African term for black magic, such as the use of body parts from people with albinism. Its West African equivalent was juju. Human sacrifice was more common in India and Nepal.

53. In 2016, Witchcraft and Human Rights Network had conducted a survey of all online reports of human rights violations relating to beliefs in witchcraft, juju, *muti* and human sacrifice. A total of 398 cases were identified from 49 countries, from all continents, and were associated with high levels of violence and abuse. Results had shown that 54 per cent were related to accusations of witchcraft, 26 per cent were *muti*-related and 9 per cent related to human sacrifice. In the majority of cases, such accusations and violence were caused by misunderstandings of the root cause of public health issues, such as in the area of mental health and disabilities such as autism and albinism. Many were related to the activities of what were termed "supernatural entrepreneurs", such as witch doctors and pastors in some Pentecostal churches.

54. There had also been some progress in different parts of the world. For example, in Papua New Guinea, the Government's Sorcery National Action Plan was exemplary, but still urgently required funding to be implemented. In Sierra Leone, a prominent witch doctor was being prosecuted for offences relating to murder for the use of body parts. At global and State levels, there had also been progress in terms of relevant human rights resolutions and statements. Nonetheless, violations related to beliefs in witchcraft were widely reported to be on the increase and appeared to be spreading into new areas and targeting more vulnerable groups.

55. George Thindwa said that he had been addressing human rights violations linked to witchcraft accusations in Malawi since 2009. Belief in witchcraft was pervasive and related violations were common, particularly among children, women and the elderly. A 2011 study had documented an extensive variety of forms of violence perpetrated against those suspected of witchcraft. Violations included physical, sexual and psychological violence, destruction of property and degrading treatment, including imprisonment. People with albinism were also vulnerable, with more than 20 such killings to date. Because community leaders and chiefs also believed in witchcraft, protection and support for those accused was inadequate, despite a Witchcraft Act (1911) that prohibited all forms of harm, including witch-hunting and accusations. More recently, beginning in 2012, a programme had been initiated to inform communities of the need to prevent and stop such violations and educate them about the law. Nonetheless, greater efforts were needed as accusations of witchcraft and associated retaliation were still widespread in Malawi.

56. Sashiprava Bindhani highlighted the crucial need to understand the specific historical and contextual manifestations and manipulations of beliefs in witchcraft and related accusations and retaliation. During the early 1960s, in the district of Mayubhanj, individuals would voluntarily confess to having killed a witch who was presumed to be responsible for local misfortune, crop failure, child deaths or infertility. The removal from the community of both the witch and his or her killer would leave people feeling cleansed.

57. In 2014, the Odisha Prevention of Witch Hunting Act came into force. From April 2014 to July 2017, 210 such cases were filed with the police. The state had also introduced a community action plan to address witch-hunting. However, beyond establishing the nature of the relationship between the victim and perpetrator, no investigations had been undertaken to determine the specific context and the social aspects of each case. Such an approach meant that the factors that sustained and reinforced such crimes, including the role and manipulation of power for personal or political gain and the reinforcement of existing social distinctions and inequalities, were neglected. Therefore, challenging witchcraft belief and accusations needed to be based on a detailed understanding of the lives, needs and priorities of those who subscribed to such beliefs, irrespective of their degree of literacy.

58. Leo Igwe reported that in Nigeria, witchcraft accusations particularly affected the rights of children and women, and in some cases men as well. Field work research in Ghana had revealed that the police responded to cases only when those accused presented themselves to complain. In his view, the United Nations ought to declare witch-hunting a harmful traditional practice. The anthropological concept of witchcraft beliefs as socially functional needed to be challenged, as did the claims of witch doctors and others who condoned beliefs in witchcraft. Similarly, the notion that witchcraft was somehow inherently African in nature, or tolerable in a way that would never be permitted in the Western world, must be rejected. Mr. Igwe also stressed the need for the belief in witchcraft to be challenged.

B. Faith-based perspectives

59. Steve Rasmussen explained that he had accumulated more than 20 years of experience in the United Republic of Tanzania and East Africa. He had discovered the deeply rooted belief that the use of magical or supernatural forces by ill-disposed persons explained misfortunes such as sickness and death. As a result, many African pastors dealt with issues of witchcraft and accusation on a weekly, if not daily, basis. As a response, Mr. Rasmussen had participated in the creation of "Light: Christians addressing witchcraft and witchcraft accusations" to expand training and seminars to local churches and communities to challenge witchcraft-related beliefs and practices. Churches could play a significant role based on the respect and great networks they had in villages and cities.

60. Peter Ash stressed that his organization, Under the Same Sun, had been established as an initiative to support persons with albinism in the United Republic of Tanzania, in the light of the discrimination and attacks they faced. As a faith-based organization, its work was guided by Christian values. In that regard, and with Christian belief in the existence of good and evil, witchcraft practice was prohibited in the organization. Furthermore, Mr. Ash clarified that, while it acknowledged its practice, his organization did not believe in

witchcraft. In that regard, he stated that not all witch doctors had attacked and killed persons with albinism, while all persons with albinism had been attacked or killed for witchcraft purposes. In that context, Under the Same Sun had undertaken a series of actions in the United Republic of Tanzania since 2008, including advocacy and awareness programmes, education seminars, media outreach with a view to demystify the condition of albinism, support for higher education for persons with albinism and work with local churches to reject witchcraft.

61. Ojolu Ojot recognized that witchcraft was subject to many interpretations. He affirmed that witchcraft and the recent increase in the number of attacks on persons with albinism was not just an issue for Christians to address but also a problem that they might be unintentionally contributing to through their teachings and certain practices. In that regard, he asserted that faith-based organizations could play an important role in providing spiritual reassurance against witchcraft for those longing to find simple answers to complex life questions, providing solidarity with persons with albinism, awareness-raising and opportunities for community mobilization, as well as physical protection and empowerment.

62. Carolyn Gent introduced the experience of Stop Child Witchcraft Accusations Coalition, based in the United Kingdom, acquired while working across Africa against witchcraft accusations affecting children. In its work, the Coalition had learned to avoid making presumptions about realities before engaging with communities and to avoid aggressive confrontation based on pointing out wrongdoings. Instead, best practices included learning about the local context, seeking expert input from a variety of sources, adopting a relational approach based on mutual respect, supporting research with focus groups and refusing to be overwhelmed by the issue. Change came from an approach based on partnerships with other religious institutions, mutual respect, research-based work, a focus on root causes and local responses.

63. Elizabeth O'Casey focused her intervention on how to address witchcraft beliefs and practices by going beyond cultural sensitivity and speaking out when beliefs were leading to human rights violations. Considering that culture was not static, there was a tendency to be too cautious about believers. While freedom of religions was to be respected, religious institutions should not tolerate misuse of belief. On that basis, she recommended thinking beyond cultural sensitivity towards universality while respecting faith and beliefs, systematically condemning harmful practices and building bridges between faith-based and non-faith-based organizations.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations[5]

64. A main outcome of the expert workshop is the identification of a variety of impacts of witchcraft beliefs, all amounting to serious human rights violations. These include attacks and mutilation, human trafficking and human sacrifice. In this regard, many experts confirmed that the number of cases reported are often significantly lower than the reality, since many instances of these human rights violations are unreported or unmonitored by official entities.

65. The expert workshop also provided insights on the definition or conceptualization of "witchcraft", recommending the use of an umbrella definition at the international level that covers the plurality of manifestations of witchcraft, with a focus on harmful practices and States' obligations as defined by international human rights law. The workshop recognized the need for awareness-raising about the practical consequences of language and the need to focus on harm, not on beliefs — even though the latter may also be addressed through public education and similar activity that enhance the conditions for human rights to thrive.

66. In an effort to identify what to include or encompass in the term "witchcraft", the following elements were brought to the fore. Witchcraft is a deeply rooted reality, engrained in societies that serve as a system of explanation as well as of exploitation of misfortune. It is fuelled by misbeliefs in supernatural powers and misconception of

[5] These reflect discussions from the floor.

public health issues. Witchcraft is a global phenomenon that is part of a wider system of oppression that often amounts to a criminal enterprise.

67. The experts recognized that witchcraft involves harmful practices in breach of international human rights standards and obligations, notably regarding human trafficking, violence against women, the duty of due diligence, the right to life and the duty of protection requiring firm and immediate action, and the duty to prevent and prosecute harmful practices and hate crimes. In this respect, international human rights law provides a robust framework to address harmful practices and other human rights violations resulting from witchcraft beliefs and practices. Children are particularly vulnerable and need safeguarding, including early interventions to tackle risks of witchcraft accusation or ritual killings. The latter are motivated by financial gain and amount to extreme violence, essentially targeting some of the most vulnerable such as persons with albinism in sub-Saharan Africa.

68. The expert workshop recognized that witchcraft-related human rights violations are occurring in all regions of the world, although manifestations vary. Likewise, the expert workshop acknowledged the relevance of religious beliefs and the role of religious institutions representing all confessions in understanding and addressing the issue. In the course of deliberations, it was noted that there were no experts at the workshop from the region of Latin America and from the religion of Islam. For future work, further attention to these areas are needed. Another area of deep concern that emerged during the workshop and that require attention in the future is the use of witchcraft-related practices as a coercive force in the context of human trafficking.

69. The expert workshop identified a range of practical recommendations to address human rights violations caused by witchcraft beliefs and practices. The experts recommended a comprehensive and multilevel response, notably based on a number principles and priority areas of intervention. These would require the competent agents to:

(a) Use the international human rights framework;

(b) Adopt legislative and institutional measures;

(c) Ensure access to justice, including increased budgets for the judiciary;

(d) Carry out education and awareness campaigns, including health awareness;

(e) Undertake data collection and monitoring;

(f) Support participatory research to better understand the causes;

(g) Establish vigilance committees to ensure community-level protection;

(h) Foster respect for international, national and local leaders;

(i) Ensure official records of birth and death;

(j) Promote the engagement of faith leaders to address the issue;

(k) Address risk factors, including improving access to basic social services and protection services;

(l) Initiate reviews of and amendments to legislation, including specific witchcraft acts that reflect human rights standards;

(m) Ensure the recovery and reintegration of victims, in particular children.

70. This comprehensive and multilevel response also needs to include specific actions by Governments in line with international human rights obligations. Governments are therefore urged to:

(a) Initiate reviews of and amendments to legislation, including witchcraft acts that reflect human rights standards.

(b) Develop programmes of awareness-raising to combat harmful practices and to support a process of social change to promote positive practices and beliefs;

(c) Engage and empower all concerned, particularly women, children, persons with disabilities and, in particular, persons with albinism and other vulnerable groups such as the elderly;

(d) Adopt a national plan to end the discrimination and harmful practices related to beliefs in witchcraft;

(e) In sub-Saharan Africa, adopt the Regional Action Plan on Albinism (A/HRC/37/57/Add.3) to end attacks and related human rights violations against persons with albinism;

(f) Build capacities and undertake training of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies on witchcraft-related harmful practices;

(g) Prohibit and/or regulate advertisement of witchcraft practices, particularly in the media;

(h) Improve primary health care and health education about disease to reduce the belief in witchcraft as a cause of illness;

(i) Regulate religious activities to prevent related harmful practices, in the absence of self-regulating mechanisms;

(j) Carry out multi-stakeholder campaigns to dismantle myths that promote witchcraft-related harm;

(k) Foster collaboration between faith-based organizations and non-faith-based organizations.

71. Some ways forward in addressing the issue of witchcraft and human rights are to:

(a) Launch a global movement against harmful practices related to beliefs in witchcraft;

(b) Address the beliefs and motivation behind witchcraft accusations and ritual attacks;

(c) Further engage regional mechanisms, in particular in Africa and South Asia;

(d) Promote United Nations resolutions on witchcraft and human rights to prompt an international response;

(e) Establish an international fund at the United Nations to address these issues and support civil society organizations and victims;

(f) Engage with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the principle of leaving no one behind, starting first with the victims of witchcraft-related harmful practices as they are among the furthest behind.

Annex

List of participants

A. Organizers

Charlotte Baker, Lancaster University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Ikponwosa Ero, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism; Gary Foxcroft, Director, Witchcraft and Human Rights Network; Charlotte Baker, Lancaster University, United Kingdom.

B. Moderators

Charlotte Baker; Kirsty Brimelow QC, Chair, Bar Human Rights Committee, England and Wales, United Kingdom; Myriam Dessables, Chief of Communications, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Adwoa Kufuor, Regional Adviser, Gender and Women's Rights, OHCHR Regional Office for East Africa, Mona Rishmawi, Chief, Rule of Law, Equality and Non-Discrimination, Research and Right to Development Division, OHCHR; Phillip Tahmindjis, Director, International Bar Associaion Human Rights Institute.

C. Panellists

International and regional human rights mechanisms and mandate holders

Reine Alpini-Gansou, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; Agnes Callamard, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; Dubravka Simonovic, Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

United Nations

Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Victoria Lee, Human Rights and Economic and Social Issues Section, OHCHR; Kathryn Leslie, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

State institutions

Sashiprava Bindhani, lawyer and Commissioner for Information, Odisha state government, India; Debbie Crowder, Metropolitan Police, London; Gertrude Hiwa, Malawi Law Reform Commission, Malawi; Serena Sasingian, Department of Justice and Attorney General, Papua New Guinea.

Universities

Leethen Bartholomew, University of Sussex, United Kingdom; Sravana Borkataky-Varma, Mission Birubala, University of North Carolina and Rice University, United States of America; Miranda Forsyth, Australian National University; Jean La Fontaine, London School of Economics; Patricia Lund, Coventry University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Robert Priest, Taylor University, United States; Steve Rasmussen, Africa International University of Kenya.

Non-governmental organization, faith-based organizations and victims

Peter Ash, Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Under the Same Sun, Canada; Oladapo Awosokanre, Africans Unite Against Child Abuse (AFRUCA), United Kingdom; Sam Clarke, Standing Voice, United Kingdom/United Republic of Tanzania; Natyabir Das, Mission Birubala; Gary Foxcroft; Carolyn Gent, Stop Child Witchcraft Accusations Coalition, United Kingdom; Philip Gibbs, Divine Word University, Madang, Papua New

Guinea; James Ibor, Basic Rights Counsel, Nigeria; Leo Igwe, human rights advocate, Nigeria; Simeon Mesaki, specialist in witchcraft studies, United Republic of Tanzania; Michelle Mildwater, HopeNow, Denmark; Dinesh Mishra, Movement Against Witchcraft-Andh Shraddha Nirmulan Samiti; Rev. Abel Ngolo, Secrétaire-général-représentant légal, Équipe pastorale auprès des enfants en détresse, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Vicky Ntetema, Under the Same Sun, United Republic of United Republic of Tanzania; Elizabeth O'Casey, International Humanist and Ethical Union, Geneva Delegation; Ojolu Ojot, Interim Assistant General Secretary, Lutheran World Federation; Avinash Patil, Maharashtra Andhshradha Nirmulan Samiti, India; Birubala Rabha, Mission Birubala, Assam State, India; Allan Sembatya, survivor of attack, Uganda; Peter Sewakiryanga, Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, Uganda and United Kingdom; Mariamu Staford, person with albinism, survivor of attack, United Republic of Tanzania; George Thindwa, Association for Secular Humanism, Malawi; Jehu Tom, Way to the Nations, Nigeria; Rev. Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, General Secretary of Evangelical Churches Winning All, Nigeria; Mardouche Yembi, survivor of witchcraft accusation, Democratic Republic of the Congo and United Kingdom.

D. Participants

United Nations

Arnaud Chaltin, Human Rights Officer, Special Procedures Branch, OHCHR; Cait Davlin, Gender Equality Team, UNHCR; Béatrice Dhaynaut, Partnerships Specialist, Geneva Liaison Office, United Nations Children's Fund; Kirstin Lange, Senior Disability Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Amber Larsen, Associate Protection Officer, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Unit, UNHCR; Anne Ogbigbo, Human Rights Officer, United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi; Soraya Oukil, Associate Legal Officer, Human Rights, UNHCR; Selma Vadala, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR; Marilena Viviani, Director, Geneva Liaison Office, United Nations Children's Fund.

Universities

Barbara Astle, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Trinity Western University Canada; Jastine Barrett, University of Kent, United Kingdom; Kirsty Bennett, Lancaster University, United Kingdom; Michael Burke, University of Sydney, Australia; Bonnie Fladung, Senior Research Associate, African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica, assistant to Norman Miller; Tjitske de Groot, PhD candidate, Free University, Brussels; Laura Hamlin-Opaluwa, PhD candidate, University of East London; Robert Kirkham, lawyer and Professor, Trinity Western University; Martha Llanos, Honorary Professor, Women's University of the Sacred Heart, Peru; Lisa Oakley, Bournemouth University, United Kingdom; Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Professor, Trinity Western University; Naomi Richman, PhD candidate, Oxford University, United Kingdom; Sam Spence, University of Bolton, United Kingdom; Rebekah J. Williams, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.

Non-governmental organizations and faith-based organizations

Jean Burke, event volunteer (albinism), Australia; Adeyemi Dada, The Albinism Network Association of Nigeria and Pan-African Albinism Alliance; Mags Gavan and Joost van der Vaulk, Red Rebel Films; Chris Gay, Engage Now Africa; Christo Geoghegan, documentary photographer; Kazungo Kassim, Albinos sans frontières, Burundi; Alex Machila, Centre for Justice and Equity; Nana Mallet-Cardoza, ASSKAM, Mumbai, India; Juliet Manning, FIZ Advocacy and Support for Migrant Women and Victims of Trafficking; Nomasonto Mazibuko, National Director, Albinism Society of South Africa, and Senamile Mazibuko, assistant; Guilaine Mazzoni, Association PERLA; Joseph Mbasha, HELPAGE Africa Regional Office; Sujatra Mishra; Benjamin Levi Moses, Global Leadership, Geneva; Amanda Muckett, Mandy Muckett and Dolina Moser, Rahab', The Salvation Army outreach to sex workers in Switzerland; Rahab Mwalukasa, Don Sawatzky, Esosa Aimiose and Benjamin Munnalall, Under The Same Sun; Adrienne Ntankeu, ANIDA; Janice Rasmussen, Henry Centre of Theology; Felix Riedel, Adviser to the Witchhunt Victims Empowerment Project; Leo Rocha Santos, Director, Way to the Nations; Magda Rossmann, HELPAGE

London; Mandeep Kaur Sanghera, human rights activist; Maliwai Sasingian, The Voice Inc.; Don Sawatzky, Under the Same Sun; Emilie Secker, Safe Child Africa; Charlotte Stemmer, Oxfam London; Neil Van Kerkhove, public switching into humanitarian concerns career; Lee Wilson, Global Change Institute, Australia.

E. Rapporteur

The Rapporteur of the expert workshop was José Parra, senior researcher, consultant to the mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism. The Rapporteur was assisted by Peter Gordon, volunteer.